

UTILITIES 1 ADDENDUM

MouseBender

Examples page 11: Omitted from text

1. MouseBender is active only when the small MouseBender window is selected. In order to activate MouseBender click in the MouseBender window.

Example 3 page 12:

1. Should read: "Clock change" is recording Controller #0...
The clock sees Controller #0 as coarse tempo change.

Mapper/Splitter

Example 5 page 18:

1. If experiencing difficulty using this example, press patch 5 instead of patch 4. See note at the end of Example 5 for a discussion of why this is necessary.

Fast Tracker

We've included a free extra with your Utilities 1 disk. It's called "Fast Tracker" and, unlike the other modules, it's a public domain program.

Fast Tracker is a 'Front End' program that simplifies the process of recording and playing songs. It puts up its own screen and takes control of SoundScape. Much of the sophistication and flexibility of SoundScape (which can translate to complexity) is hidden. You don't have to deal with the concept of the Patch Panel and separate modules communicating through MIDI. Fast Tracker takes care of these for you. And everything you need to record songs using the internal Sampler and Console Keyboard and external MIDI instruments is accessed from one simplified interface.

Yet, you can always push the Fast Tracker screen to the back and work with SoundScape directly.

Fast Tracker is a good introduction to working with SoundScape because it gets you up and running immediately. Then, as you become comfortable with recording music in the Fast Tracker environment, you can start peeking behind Fast Tracker at SoundScape and see what's really going on. And you can use facilities that are not accessible from the Fast Tracker controls.

Fast Tracker is not a module. It does not have an icon that appears in the Patch Panel. It is not loaded when SoundScape is invoked. Instead, Fast Tracker is run on its own. It automatically starts SoundScape (but you will notice no little SoundScape window in the top left corner) and, in turn, SoundScape loads all the modules that would normally be loaded.

When you shut down Fast Tracker, it shuts down SoundScape.

Here are some of the features Fast Tracker gives you:

- 16 Tracks for recording and playback. 8 are displayed at one time.
- LED meters display the music as it is played.
- Each track can be placed in RECORD, PLAY, or MUTE mode.
- All timing is displayed in beats per measure.
- Clock resolutions of up to 96 clocks per quarter note are supported.
- Tracks are automatically quantized as they are recorded.
- A metronome can be turned on.
- A lead in count can be turned on.
- The SoundScape environment format is supported for loading and saving songs, so music created with Fast Tracker can be loaded as a SoundScape environment and vice versa.
- The IFF SMUS format is supported for loading and saving so you can easily transfer your work between Fast Tracker and other programs that support this IFF standard.

A Tour of Fast Tracker

Here's a whirlwind tour of Fast Tracker (have no fear, it's so easy to use, it really doesn't need a manual.) Just get Fast Tracker running by clicking on its icon, then read this as you look over the screen.

Once again, Fast Tracker is not a module, it starts SoundScape up, so you can run it first (just make sure you have SoundScape installed on your workbench as you normally would.)

When Fast Tracker is run, it first loads SoundScape and initialises the SoundScape modules. Then, it displays its own screen.

The Track List

The track list occupies the top half of the screen. Fast Tracker supports sixteen tracks for recording and playback. There is only enough room on the screen to show eight of these tracks, so you select which bank of sixteen you wish to look at with a switch to the left of the eight displayed tracks.

Each track displays its name, what it is sending to, and whether it is in RECORD, PLAY, or MUTE mode.

By clicking on the name of the track, you can open a requester that lets you rename it, clear it, and clear the

sampled sound it plays. Each track can send its notes to either the MIDI connector or the Amiga's internal Sampler. Each track has a button that lets you alternate between the two.

Each track also has a button that selects between Record, Play, and Mute modes. When the button is red, it can record. When it is blue, it is in Play mode. When it is black, it is muted. Click on the button to change the mode.

A track won't automatically record just because it is in RECORD mode. The Record button in the tape transport controls must also be turned on. When the Record button is off, all tracks in RECORD mode simply behave as if they were in PLAY mode. This provides an extra safety from accidentally erasing newly recorded tracks. And, it makes it very easy to review what you have just recorded.

When only one track is in RECORD mode, it automatically gets whatever notes are played by the Console Keyboard and MIDI In, regardless of what MIDI channels these devices are set up to send on. This makes it very easy to record one track at a time, you don't have to think about MIDI channels. However, if more than one track is in RECORD mode, each needs to receive on a different MIDI channel. This is solved by having each set to receive on the channel it sends out on.

Tape Transport Controls

In the lower right hand corner of the screen are all the buttons and displays that make up the Tape Transport Controls. These control starting and stopping playback and recording, display where you are in a song, and let you fast forward and rewind the music.

The rewind button is on the far left and has two left arrows on it. Hold down on the rewind button to rewind the "tape". The display will decrement as it rewinds. Lift up when you reach the desired destination.

The next button over instructs the Tape Deck to play from the beginning. Click on this button to start playing from the very start of the song. It automatically performs the operation of rewinding to the start and then initiates playback.

Next is the play button. Click on this to start playback from wherever you are in the song.

Then the fast forward button. This has two right arrows. Hold down on this button to fast forward the "tape". The display will increment as it moves forward. Lift up when you reach the desired destination.

The fat button on the bottom is the Stop button. Click on this button to halt playback and recording.

Finally, there is the Record button, the one with the 'R' on it. In order to record any tracks, this button must be turned on. Turn it on by clicking on it once - it becomes red. Turn it off by clicking on it again.

As a safety, the Record button is automatically turned off every time the music is halted with the Stop button.

To record a track, set it in RECORD mode, turn on the Record button, and hit either the Play or Play From Beginning buttons. When done, hit the Stop button, the Record button will turn off and you can immediately rewind and listen to what you recorded.

Punch In and Out recording can be done by simply clicking on the Record button while the tracks are playing. All tracks in RECORD mode will suddenly switch from playback to recording. Click on the Record button a second time to punch back out again, and the tracks are playing once again. You can punch in and out any number of times in one session.

Various Controls

You can change the number of beats in a measure. To do so, click on the arrow buttons in the Beats Per Measure box.

To edit what type of note is considered to be the beat, click on the arrow buttons in the Beat box.

Every time you record, Fast Tracker automatically quantizes the track. "Quantize" is a fancy term for "clean up the slop." For example, if Quantize is set at an eighth note, when you record, everything you play will be resolved to the accuracy of eighth notes. To change the quantization, click on the arrow buttons and it will cycle through all the possible values, including a bright red X if you wish not to quantize.

You can set the playback speed, in quarter notes per minute, in the Clock Rate box. Click on the arrow

buttons to adjust the rate.

If you would like, Fast Tracker will play a click tone on every beat. Click on the On/Off button in the Metronome box to enable and disable the metronome.

Sometimes, it's nice to have a lead in of silence (or just metronome) prior to the music starting. Click on the On/Off button in the Lead In box to enable and disable this lead in period.

Menus

Fast Tracker also uses menus, primarily for loading and saving files. These are standard Amiga menus: move the mouse to the menu bar, click on the right mouse button, and drag down to select a menu item.

The Project Menu

The first menu is the Project menu. From it you can open and save files, find out about Fast Tracker, and quit the program.

New: Select this menu item if you wish to clear what you are working on and start afresh. All samples will be unloaded and all tracks will be cleared.

Open: With this command you can open a song that you have already recorded. This clears out the current music and puts up a standard SoundScape file requester with songs to choose from. Because it is a SoundScape file requester, the screen switches to the SoundScape screen to select the song. Don't be alarmed. Once you have selected a song, Fast Tracker returns and the music is loaded.

The music that you load is in the SoundScape environment format, so you can load songs that were saved straight from the SoundScape Patch Panel.

Open SMUS: This command lets you read in a song in the IFF SMUS format. SMUS is a standard for music that several programs, including Deluxe Music Construction Set and Sonix, can read and write. So, you can load music that was scored with these other programs.

Open Sound: Use this to load a sound into the Amiga's sound sampling hardware. Up to fifteen sounds can be loaded at one time (the sixteenth is reserved for the metronome.)

Save: This saves the score you are working on. All sounds and tracks are saved in the SoundScape environment format, so they can be loaded later from SoundScape's Patch Panel.

Save As: This is the same as Save, but it assumes you wish to save the music under a new name, so a standard SoundScape file name requester is displayed, and you enter the name into it.

Save SMUS: This will save the score in the IFF SMUS format so programs that are SMUS literate, such as Deluxe Music Construction Set and Sonix, can read what you've done.

Quit: Select this when you are done with Fast Tracker. Fast Tracker will close, then SoundScape will ask if you want to close it down, too. If you elect to keep SoundScape running, you will need to run another program that invokes SoundScape, such as Install Modules, or the SoundScape program that comes with SoundScape, so that you can close SoundScape down later on.

The Clocks Per Quarter Note Menu

The second menu gives you a choice of the resolution for recording and playback. The MIDI standard is 24 clocks per quarter note. However, you may wish for a higher resolution. With this menu, you can select 24, 48, or 96 clocks per quarter note. However, this only works if you have a clock in your SoundScape system that supports a higher resolution. The standard SoundScape clock does not, so if you select a higher resolution, it will stay at 24 (and the menu will reflect that.) However, if you have Smooth Clocker or SMPTE, the higher resolutions are supported.

Public Domain

Since this is a public domain program, you are free to pass it on to friends (which is strictly illegal with the other modules on the Utilities 1 disk.) This also means that Mimetics can not take the responsibility of providing technical support and updates for this freebee.

'Deluxe Music Construction Set' is a trademark of Electronic Arts. 'Sonix' is a trademark of Aegis Development.